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## Book Notices.

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### The Inter-Biblical Period.

*Historical Connection between the Old and New Testaments.* By the Rev. John Skinner, M.A. In the series of "Bible Class Primers." Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark; New York: Scribner and Welford. 24 mo., pp. 90. Price, 25 cents.

This little pamphlet of ninety duodecimo pages aims to present a connected outline of the course of events between the captivity and the time of Jesus Christ. The importance of this period of history cannot well be over estimated. It is more than a connection between two separated epochs. In these centuries the old Jewish life reached its climax and fell away. In its decay there sprang out of its life the flourishing sprout of the new Jewish life as we find it in the New Testament times. No student of the Christian religion should be ignorant of this vitally important epoch. If it will do nothing else this knowledge will establish him more firmly in the conviction of the unique character of Christianity. This book confines itself strictly to the history of the period. It would have been improved if a few pages had been devoted to an account of its literature, which, in the absence of reliable historical sources, is of value in understanding the life and thought of those times. The writer seems to have consulted the best modern authorities as well as the ancient sources. He has made a useful primer for intelligent Bible class teachers.

### Through Bible Lands.

*Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert and Palestine.* By Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D. New edition, revised and enlarged. New York: American Tract Society, 12 mo., pp. 460. Price, \$2.25.

These popular sketches of his travels in the East were written by Dr. Schaff about ten years ago, immediately after his return from a prolonged visit to these lands. They possessed a charm arising from the union of a simple and pleasant style with the possession and impartation of large and exact knowledge upon Biblical subjects, which has kept them in demand and has called for a new edition. Not many changes have been made in the text, but three chapters have been added. The most important of these additions is a chapter on the Latest Discoveries in Egypt with a discussion of the relations of the Bible and Egyptology. Prepared by Dr. Edward Naville, it is thoroughly up to the times and contains some interesting and valuable matter. The book will doubtless take on a fresh popularity and usefulness in this new edition.

### The Story of Daniel.

*The Story of Daniel, His Life and Times.* By P. H. Hunter, Minister of Elie. Second edition. New York: Wilbur B. Ketcham; 12 mo., pp. 357. Price, \$2.00.

This is "an attempt to tell in plain English the story of a great man's life." Our author very justly rejects the modern so-called critical view that makes the Book of Daniel a "patriotic fraud;" although he thinks it quite possible that the events may have taken on a new meaning in the Maccabean period, and

received, at that time, their present and final shape. This is granting more than would, in this country, be regarded as allowable. But the book does not discuss these questions. In eighteen brief and well written chapters are sketched the leading events of the life and work of Daniel. Most fresh and interesting to the average reader will be the chapters on (1) *Chaldean Lore*, in which the learning and occupation of the Chaldean wise man are described, (2) *the First Trial*, which sees no miracle in the fact that Daniel and his friends grow "fairer and fatter in flesh" on the cheap fare which they chose in preference to the dainties of the king's table; (3) *the Forgotten Dream*, in which the author errs in laying undue stress upon the cruel and tyrannical character of Nebuchadnezzar, who, though a tyrant by his position, was humane compared with many another of the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchs; (4) *Babylon the Great*, a most vivid picture of that ancient city and its life; (5) *the Last Banquet*. Mr. Hunter shows a considerable familiarity with the Babylonian material of this important period, and a remarkable skill in explaining away the difficulties. He does not attempt a discussion of the prophetic element. In diction and interest the book is far superior to that one recently published on the same subject in the series of "Men of the Bible."

#### The Parables.

*The Parables of the Lord Jesus according to S. Matthew.* Arranged, compared and illustrated. By Thomas Richey, S.T.D. New York: E. and J. B. Young & Co., 1888. 8vo., pp. 406. Price, \$2.00.

The author of this work is the professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Episcopal Theological Seminary of New York. His is a comparatively new name in the field of exegesis and he has chosen a somewhat difficult task for his first attempt. Yet there is always room for a good book on the Parables. We still have to go back to Trench who, though somewhat antiquated, has not yet been superseded. Dr. Richey has not contributed very much additional light to this portion of Scripture. He depends largely upon the best recent commentators, quoting freely, perhaps too freely, in view of the impression which it gives that his book is a compilation, from Goebel and Bruce. His standpoint and fundamental position is a sound one, that the Parables must be studied as they stand in their connections. The groups in each gospel should be taken up by themselves in their order. But he certainly lays too much stress upon this natural and obvious method when he declares that "the displacing of any one member of the series must of necessity have a fatal result." The fact is that the various evangelists do arrange them differently. Hence the older method of harmonizing and comparing the different parables in the several gospels has something in its favor and must be used in connection with the other, if in subordination. This extreme position of the writer also implies too rigid and formal a structure for these narratives, taking no account therein of the views of the origin of the gospels which are now becoming well established.

But apart from these and other criticisms which might be made, the author may be commended for the carefulness of his exegesis as well as for his freedom from dogmatic presuppositions. Perhaps the highest point of excellence is reached in the homiletical element which pervades the work. The expositions and applications are clear and spirited. The writer is a preacher, and if this book is to have an enduring usefulness, it will be because it supplies a manifest need of scientifically prepared and forcible homiletical helps for the study of the parables. It is to be hoped that he will be encouraged by the reception of this volume to make a similar study of the parables of the other gospels.